

Landmark Report Demonstrates the Economic Value of Physical Therapy in the United States



New Study by the American Physical Therapy Association Confirms Physical Therapy Can Help Americans Live Better Lives While Saving the Health Care System Millions of Dollars Annually

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Alexandria, VA — The American Physical Therapy Association released a landmark report: “[The Economic Value of Physical Therapy in the United States](#).” This macro-economic study examines the cost-effectiveness and economic value of physical therapist services by comparing physical therapy with non-physical therapy-based care across several health conditions that are prevalent across the U.S. The results of this study demonstrate that, where medically appropriate, more widespread use of physical therapist services would deliver both health and economic benefits to patients and the U.S. health care system.

“APTA’s ‘Economic Value of Physical Therapy in the United States’ report builds on a growing body of scientific evidence that supports the high-value, lower-cost interventions physical therapy offers patients and the health care system,” said APTA President Roger Herr, PT, MPA. “For decades, our profession has delivered cost-effective care that changes lives, and for just as long, we have strived to demonstrate our value to policymakers, payers, other health care providers, and the public. Our new study now allows us to make a compelling case for the impact of physical therapy on not only individuals, but society as a whole.”

The “Economic Value of Physical Therapy in the United States” report uses an economic model to calculate the net benefits to patients and the U.S. health care system of choosing physical therapy over alternative treatments for [eight specific conditions](#), including falls prevention, osteoarthritis of the knee, and acute low back pain. The study incorporates a variety of patient demographics, stages of life, and the breadth of physical therapist interventions.

“Not only do these evidence-based findings demonstrate the value that physical therapists and physical therapist assistants provide today, but ‘The Economic Value of Physical Therapy in the United States’ study is a dynamic resource that will evolve over time and, more importantly, will empower APTA and its members to tell our story, to engage policymakers, payers, employers, and consumers, and to begin to reshape the ways in which those outside the profession understand and implement policies and programs to best leverage the value of physical therapy,” stated Herr.

APTA engaged the Nous Group, an international management consulting firm specializing in health and economics, to develop a robust [methodology](#) for examining the costs and benefits of a selection of condition-specific physical therapist services.



Guided by APTA subject matter experts, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify those conditions with the strongest evidence. Ultimately, eight conditions were chosen based on the prevalence of the condition and its associated level of health care spending across the U.S.

APTA is using the findings in “The Economic Value of Physical Therapy in the United States” report to inform consumers, policymakers, payers, and employers about the significant role physical therapy plays and the economic value it brings to the health care system. To learn more about APTA’s campaign and “The Economic Value of Physical Therapy in the United States,” visit ValueofPT.com.

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The American Physical Therapy Association represents more than 100,000 physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and physical therapy students nationwide. Visit apta.org to learn more.